

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 02349 101436Z

44

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /017 W
----- 117071

R 100851Z JUN 75
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9862
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS OSLO 2349

JOINT STATE/USIA

STATE: FOR CU/WE CU/CP
USIA: FOR ICS/DA, IWE
LONDON: FOR RRU

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL
SUBJECT: THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY ENSEMBLE PRERFORMANCES IN
NORWAY

1. THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY ENSEMBLE WAS A SMASH HIT AT THE
BERGEN INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL WITH ITS TWO RAGTIME CONCERTS WHICH
PLAYED TO FULL HOUSES ON TWO DIFFERENT EVENINGS. IN ADDITION
IT PLAYED TWO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC CONCERTS TO SMALLER, BUT ENTHUSIASTIC

AUDIENCES IN ANOTHER MORE INTIMATE AUDITORIUM.

2. THE GROUP WAS A SUCCESS IN ALL RESPECTS. IT RECEIVED AN
ENORMOUSLY POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE PUBLIC AND A GREAT DEAL OF
ATTENTION--ALL FAVORABLE--IN THE PRESS. BOTH RAGTIME AND CONTEMPO-
RARY PERFORMANCES WERE TELEVISED FOR SHOWING IN NORWAY AND OTHER
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AT THE NORWEGIAN
STATE TELEVISION SYSTEM (NORK) HOPES TO GET GUNTHER SCHULLER, THE
ENSEMBLE DIRECTOR, BACK NEXT YEAR TO CONDUCT THE OSLO ORCHESTRA IN
A TELEVISED PERFORMANCE.

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3. THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ARE DELIGHTFUL. BRIGHT, TALENTED,

PLEASANT, THEY ARE EXCELLENT REPRESENTATIVES OF AMERICAN YOUTH.

4. HERE ARE SOME EXCERPTS FROM REVIEWS:

OSLO'S DAGBLADET: "...I CAN'T REMEMBER WHEN I ENJOYED A CONCERT MORE. THEY PRESENTED CLASSICAL OR TRADITIONAL RAGTIME IN MODERN ARRANGEMENTS WITH CATHING GOOD HUMOR AND REFINED ELEGANCE. WHEN PLAYED LIKE THIS ONE UNDERSTANDS HOW SOPHISTICATED RAGTIME CAN BE...THEIR PERFORMANCE OF BOTH TYPES OF MUSCI (RAGTIME AND CONTEMPORARY) WAS PRECISE AND FULL OF EXPRESSION."

OSLO'S AFTENPOSTEN (NORWAY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL PAPER):

"THE (FIRST CONTEMPORARY) CONCERT WAS VARIED AND INTERESTING AND RECEIVED ENTHUSIASTICALLY ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE MUSIC WAS NEW AND UNUSAL. GUNTHER SCHULLER GAVE SHORT AND INSTRUCTIVE INTRODUCTIONS BEFORE EACH PIECE WHICH CREATED A FREE AND EASY CONTACT BETWEEN AUDIENCE AND PERFORMERS. IT WAS AN EXCITING CONCERT, THE PERFORMERS BEING FINE REPRESENTATIVES OF A MUSCI CONSERVATORY THAT MUST BE OF A VERY HIGH STANDARD."

BERGEN'S MORGENAVISEN: "...THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY RAGTIME ENSEMBLE FROM BOSTON PLAYED RAGTIME IN THE KONSERTPALEET YESTERDAY EVENING AND CREATED SUCH EXCITEMENT AND LOUD APPRECIATION THAT ONE THOUGHT THE CONCERT WOULD NEVER COME TO AN END BECAUSE OF ALL THE EXTRA NUMBERS THEY WERE URGED TO PLAY."

5. AS INDICATED ABOVE, SCHULLER GAVE EXCELLENT EXPLANATIONS AND HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF BOTH THE RAGTIME AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC HE PERFORMED, AND THE COMMENTS ONE HEARD PERSONALLY AND READ IN THE REVIEWS SHOWED THAT THESE WERE HIGHLY APPRECIATED.

6. COPIES OF ALL REVIEWS WILL BE FORWARDED TO STATE, USIA, THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY, AND THE BUSINESS FIRMS THAT FINANCED MOST OF THE EXPENSES OF THE GROUP'S EUROPEAN TOUR.

7. BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE OF A HIGHLY CAPABLE TOUR MANAGER, WHO ACCOMPANIES THE ENSEMBLE, THE DEMANDS ON THE POST AFTER THE GROUP ARRIVED, WERE MINIMAL.

8. SCHULLER IS INTERESTED IN PRINCIPAL IN DOING A STATE DEPARTMENT SPONSORED TOUR, AN IDEA WE ENDORSE. THE ENSEMBLE COULD TOUR FOR ABOUT THREE WEEKS, AND IN ADDITION TO RAGTIME AND CONTEMPORARY CONCERTS MIGHT PERFORM PROGRAMS THAT SELECT FROM VARIOUS UNCLASSIFIED

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PERIODS OF AMERICAN MUSIC, E.G. 19TH CENTURY CHAMBER MUSIC, RAGTIME, JAZZ, CONTEMPORARY. WE DISCUSSED THIS WITH SCHULLER WHO LIKES THE IDEA, AND WHO STATED HE COULD ALSO DO ENTIRE PROGRAMS OF JAZZ FROM THE 1930'S AND OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC FOR STRINGS. WE RECOMMEND HIM AND THE ENSEMBLE FOR FURTHER TOURS. BYRNE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MUSIC, CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975OSLO02349
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750202-0294
From: OSLO JOINT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750665/aaaacgxc.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 NOV 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 NOV 2002 by PhilliR0>; APPROVED <09 FEB 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY ENSEMBLE PRERFORMANCES IN NORWAY
TAGS: SCUL, NO, NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY RAGTIME EN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006